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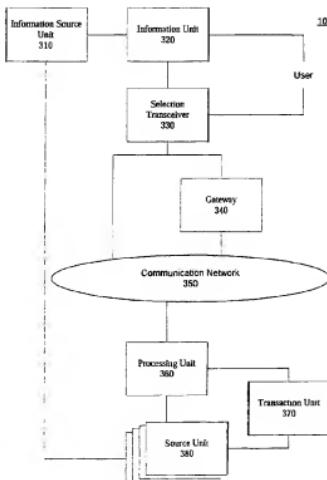
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(54) Title: MEDIUM INDEPENDENT ELECTRONIC COMMERCE SYSTEM AND METHOD



(57) **Abstract:** The present invention resolves the problems associated with traditionally distinct media-based systems (100) by providing an integrated solution, which is medium independent and has the capability of interfacing with various types of communication systems (350). In particular, the present invention provides a simple interface via a selection transceiver (330) for the user to interact with traditional media (310, 320) as well as any new types of media (310, 320) that might later be developed. In addition, a gateway (340) provides an interface between the selection transceiver (330) and a communication network (350). Furthermore, the processing unit (360), which receives the data codes received by the selection transceiver (330) from the various mediums (310, 320), provides the user with a convenient mechanism to communicate via the communication network (350) with the source units (e.g., merchants) (310, 320) without interrupting the activities of the user. Lastly, the present invention provides the source units (310, 320) with a cost effective mechanism for disseminating information to users and obtaining potentially immediate responses back from the users as to their selections. This present invention, therefore, achieves a low cost, simple, secure, easy to use, integrated selection and distribution system (100) by eliminating the reliance on any one form of media (310, 320), any one form of communication (350) for the user to communicate selections to the source unit (310, 320) and eliminating the need for sophisticated encryption techniques.